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Human trafficking in the hospitality industry: Employee awareness, beliefs and training

by

Marilyn Lea Gasienica

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major: Hospitality Management

Program of Study Committee:

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The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this thesis. The Graduate College will ensure this thesis is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2020

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ABSTRACT

Human trafficking is a growing concern in the hospitality industry. The intersect of human trafficking and the lodging industry are twofold: 1) victims staying at hotels during transportation and 2) sexual exploitation or activity occurring at hotels. Therefore, it is important that hotel employees know how to recognize signs of human trafficking as signs vary from case to case.

The purpose of this study was to identify hotel employees' awareness, beliefs, and training regarding human trafficking. A survey was developed and pilot tested. A convenience sample of hotel employees in the Midwest were surveyed and data were analyzed. Participants were asked questions regarding their awareness, beliefs, and level of training related to human trafficking in the lodging industry. Simple statistics were used to analyze the data from the completed surveys. Out of 118 respondents 52, (44.07%) answered that they were moderately aware on the topic of human trafficking. When asked how prevalent human trafficking is in the hospitality industry, 44 (37.61%) of 117 respondents answered that it was moderately prevalent; followed by 43 (36.75%) of the respondents answering it was extremely prevalent. Of 117 respondents, 71 (60.68%) answered that in their current position, training on human trafficking would be extremely beneficial.

Hospitality is a global industry; thus, there is opportunity to spread awareness about human trafficking to an expansive community throughout the world. It is important that hotel employees are given ample information and training in order to help them handle situations that involve human trafficking in their establishments.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking has been recognized as a growing concern in the hospitality industry and the hotel sector has a vulnerability for sexual and labor exploitation (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). It is important to understand the significance and impacts human trafficking has on the lodging industry. Likewise, the hospitality industry can have a significant impact on mitigating human trafficking because there are many different facets that intersect including transportation, events, and lodging. These areas all aid human traffickers to continue to exploit and trade individuals due to lack of awareness by hotel employees as well as guests. Hospitality is a global industry and because of this presence, there is opportunity to spread awareness to an expansive community throughout the world. It is important that hotel employees are given ample information and training in order to help them feel comfortable handling situations that involve human trafficking in their establishments. Statistics indicate that in 2018, there were 10,949 human trafficking cases reported (Polaris Project, 2018). In addition, as of 2018 there were 85,613 victims worldwide (Statista Research Department, 2019).

There are many different aspects that come into play with the hotel industry and human trafficking. Two main aspects are as follows: victims staying at hotels during transportation and sexual exploitation activities occurring at hotels. Due to this, it is important that employees know how to recognize signs of human trafficking because the signs can vary depending on the type of case. Employees might be better served if training was specific to their departments due to different variables each department might encounter during a human trafficking case.

This study will be focus on assessing hotel employee perceptions about human trafficking. The hospitality industry is comprised of multiple sectors including travel and tourism, lodging event management, food and beverage, and recreation. Although all of these sectors also face cases of human trafficking, this study is designed to focus on the hotel industry.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research study is to identify the current level of training employees in the lodging industry have on human trafficking. It will also identify and analyze employees' awareness and belief on the topic. It is important to collect these data in order to help spread awareness in the hospitality industry about the occurrences of human trafficking that take place daily in lodging establishments and what employees can do to help mitigate human trafficking. For this study, it is important that we look at establishments as a whole, including all departments, to get representative data. This study will include employees from all departments in lodging facilities. It will also include different levels of employees; data will be collected from front line employees and upper management.

The specific study objectives are as follows:

- 1) Determine the current level of training that hotel employees receive regarding human trafficking
- 2) Determine the level of awareness regarding human trafficking by employees.
- 3) Determine the current beliefs employees in the lodging industry have regarding human trafficking.

Significance of Study

This research study is significant for the lodging industry because in order to combat human trafficking, employees need to be trained and aware of human trafficking signs. By conducting this study, we will be able to analyze and determine where the gaps are in the training processes. This will allow the lodging industry to create a better plan to educate and train employees on how to identify and handle situations that involve trafficking.

This study will also help to raise awareness within the hospitality industry and show how prevalent human trafficking is within the lodging industry. Awareness by employees and guests can make it more difficult for traffickers to carry out their plan to exploit or traffic victims. If people are unaware of what is happening around them, traffickers will continue to exploit victims because they lack the fear of getting caught. Paraskevas and Brookes (2018) stated, “despite the growth in trafficking in human beings globally, awareness of this criminal activity within tourism businesses is limited predominately due to a lack of training” (p. 154). Thus, it is important that we seek and understand employee level of awareness currently in the industry.

Definition of Terms

Hospitality Industry: Businesses that focus on delivering a warm reception and service to guests traveling away from their homes. (Walker, 2009).

Human Trafficking: “The action or practice of illegally transporting people from one country or area to another, typically for the purposes of forced labor or sexual exploitation” (Lexico, 2019, para. 1).

Labor Trafficking: “A form of modern-day slavery in which individuals perform labor or services through the use of force, fraud, or coercion” (National Human Trafficking Hotline, N.A., para. 1).

Sex Trafficking: “The action or practice of illegally transporting people from one country or area to another for the purpose of sexual exploitation” (Lexico, 2019, para. 1).

Training: The process of teaching an individual a specific skill or technique (Lexico, 2019).

Awareness: Knowledge an individual has on a specific topic (Lexico, 2019).

Beliefs: Value that an individual hold true regarding a situation even though there may not be support to back it up (Lexico, 2019).

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is a comprehensive overview of the literature that has been published about human trafficking and the hospitality industry. There are five sections contained in this chapter. The first gives an overview of the hospitality industry and the second gives an overview of a segment of the hospitality industry, the lodging industry. In section three, an overview of human trafficking is provided followed by human trafficking within the hospitality industry. The final section reviews preventative measures, such as campaigns, that are in place to help combat human trafficking with the industry.

Hospitality Industry Overview

The hospitality industry is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the world and is comprised of multiple sectors (Walker, 2009). These different facets include travel and tourism, lodging, event management, food and beverage, and recreation. The travel sector includes any form of transportation individuals take to get to their destination. This may include but is not limited to airlines, cruise ships, trains, and automobiles (Walker, 2009). The lodging industry includes any facilities that guests stay in such as hotels, motels, and resorts (Walker, 2009). Event management operations include meetings, conventions, and visitor bureau organizations (Walker, 2009). Food and beverage organizations include restaurants, bars, and catering services (Walker, 2009). The last sector that is included under the hospitality umbrella is recreation which includes theme parks, arcades, and national parks (Walker, 2009).

Some unique aspects of the hospitality industry are as follows: open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and involves perishable products. Due to the fact that most establishments are open 24/7, there are usually four shifts that the industry relies heavily on in order to maintain work flow (Walker, 2009). Perishability of the products being sold presents a challenge; perishability refers to the limited lifetime of the products being sold such as rooms in a hotel (Walker, 2009). The hospitality industry has a strong focus on guest satisfaction and service which are often considered intangible products (Walker, 2009). Positive guest satisfaction generally leads to repeat customer business and an increase in profits (Walker, 2009).

The hospitality industry faces many obstacles such as high employee turnover and unskilled labor force. These aspects may contribute to the level of awareness and training that employees have in regards to human trafficking within the industry. Today in the hospitality industry, management styles have started to shift. Managers are focusing on a participative management approach. This approach helps to give employees resources they need as well as encourages employees to think on their own. When this management style is used, employees feel more empowered which leads to higher productivity along with increased employee and guest satisfaction (Walker, 2009). This type of management style may lend itself to empowering employees when suspected human trafficking activities occur in a hotel.

Lodging Industry Overview

Lodging establishments are made up of many different departments that help the hotel to run efficiently. These departments are led by individuals who oversee large areas within the hotel. Directors of these departments include but are not limited to room operations, food and beverage, marketing/sales, human resources, accounting, and engineering (Walker, 2009). These individuals help to make the major decisions that affect the business and are usually referred to

as the executive committee (Walker, 2009). There are many different classifications of hotel in order to accommodate all types of travelers and their needs. Some hotel classifications are resort hotels, casino hotels, full-service hotels, mid-price hotels, extended stay hotels, and luxury hotels (Walker, 2009). These hotels are rated on a diamond scale of one through five. Hotels with a rating of one have limited services and those with a rating of five have the highest level of service (Walker, 2009).

Given customers ever-changing desires, the lodging industry is changing and keeping up with trends. One of the biggest ones being technology such as room technology and systems to make the guest stay more seamless (Walker, 2009). Some of these technological advances include mobile check in, keyless entry to guest rooms, and online reservations. Technological advances can help to aid human traffickers continue to traffic their victims by increasing anonymity. Individuals can now check in online, receive a mobile key for their rooms, and even chose the exact room they want based on a floor plan. The lodging industry will always be adapting and changing to the needs of society and their guests.

Human Trafficking Overview

Human trafficking has been increasing over the past nine years; from 2008 to 2017, the number of victims has tripled (Statista Research Department, 2019). As of 2018, there were 85,613 victims worldwide (Statista Research Department, 2019). The Department of Homeland Security defines human trafficking as “a form of modern-day slavery and involves the use of force, fraud or coercion to obtain labor or commercial sex” (The Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). Victims of human trafficking can vary and be from any part of the world; human trafficking is not limited to one area and does not exclude any demographic. Risk factors of human trafficking include, but are not limited to: relocation, substance abuse, homeless youth,

and mental health (Polaris Project, 2018). Women and children living in poverty tend to be the most vulnerable in these situations because they lack power (Brooks & Heaslip, 2019). There are two forms of exploitation that fall under the umbrella of human trafficking which include: labor trafficking and sex trafficking.

The Federal Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 defines human trafficking terms. “Labor trafficking occurs when a person knowingly recruits, entices, harbors, transports, provides, or obtains by any means including, but not limited to, the use of force, abduction, coercion, fraud, deception, blackmail, or causes harm to another individual for forced labor or services” (Child Welfare Information Gateway, as cited in The Federal Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, p. 2). The most common tactics of recruitment are false job advertisements, false promises, or smuggling (Polaris, 2018). Labor trafficking involves exploitation of the victim in situations such as domestic servitude or sweatshop work settings (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2016).

Sex trafficking is defined as “criminal activity whereby one or more persons are subjected to engaging in commercial sexual activity through the use of force, fraud, or coercion” (Child Welfare Information Gateway, as cited in The Federal Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, p. 2). These sexual exploitation acts may include victims being forced to participate in prostitution or pornography. Common tactics of recruitment for sex trafficking include marriage propositions, family related instances, or acting as a benefactor (Polaris, 2018). If the victim is under the age of eighteen, this is considered to be sex trafficking of a minor.

Every year the Human Trafficking Resource Center, which is operated by Polaris, compiles a statistical overview of Human Trafficking cases. Data are generated from phone call tips, emails, and reports submitted online. In 2018, there were 10,949 cases of human trafficking reported (Polaris Project, 2018). Of those cases, 7,859 involved sex trafficking, 1,249 were labor trafficking, 1,202 were not specified, and 639 of the cases involved both sex and labor trafficking (Polaris Project, 2018). Some of the top industries for labor trafficking included, but were not limited to, domestic work, agriculture, and traveling sales crews (Polaris Project, 2018). Spa businesses were the highest industry for sex trafficking with 861 cases reported in 2018; other industries for sex trafficking also include hotel/motel and pornography (Polaris Project, 2018). Of the cases reported in 2018, 7,126 were female victims and 1,137 were male victims (Polaris Project, 2018). Of these victims 5,070 were adults and 2,378 were classified as minors (Polaris Project, 2018).

Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry

Human trafficking occurs in all areas of the hospitality industry such as: hotels, sporting events, theme parks, cruise ships, and airlines (Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). Within the hospitality industry, the hotel sector is the premier choice for traffickers who are seeking to sexually exploit victims (Sarkisian, 2015). When operational practices are lacking, it puts the hotel at risk to become involved or help facilitate the crime of trafficking human beings (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). These researchers also discussed that there are concerns for hotels such as financial risk, civil liability, and criminal implications (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). Not only can the hotel face legal implications, but playing a role in the trafficking of human beings can hurt the image of industry as well as damage the hotel's brand reputation (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018).

The Department of Homeland Security discusses human trafficking and the impact it has on the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry follows strict policies to protect the privacy of their guests which makes the hotel sector the most receptive in condoning traffickers to continue to exploit victims (Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). To add to the aspect of anonymity, individuals who seek out participation in sexual exploitation usually travel away from home to commit such crimes (Sarkisian, 2015). Cases involving human trafficking can occur in all types of hotels varying from economy to luxury brand hotels (Sarkisian, 2015). The Department of Homeland Security states, “staff are not necessarily educated on how to recognize and report signs of trafficking” (para. 1). For this reason, many government and nonprofit organizations have taken steps to help the prevention of human trafficking. Such programs include *Blue Campaign* by The Department of Homeland Security, *No Room for Trafficking* by The American Hotel and Lodging Association, and *The Code*. These preventative steps and programs will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

The Polaris Project did a statistical analysis of reported human trafficking cases in the hospitality industry between 2007 and 2015 in the United States. Of the cases reported, the majority involved sex trafficking (92%), labor trafficking (5%), and both sex and labor trafficking (2%) (Polaris Project, 2015). A majority of victims that were involved in these cases consisted of adults (69%), minors (45%), female (94%), male (8%), and transgender (1%) (Polaris Project, 2015). These percentages were based of cases that occurred within the United States and of these cases, a majority of the victims were U.S. citizens (59%) and foreign citizens (13%) (Polaris Project, 2015). The Polaris Project also determined who reported the case and how close they were to the situation. Of the cases reported by callers, a majority of the callers had direct contact with the victim (42%), callers were self-reports by the victim (22%), callers

had observed suspicious activity (19%), and callers had indirect contact with the victim (13%) (Polaris Project, 2015).

In a trade journal article (Mest, 2018) states five misconceptions and realities about human trafficking in hospitality are identified as follows:

1. Human trafficking only occurs in the economy hotel segment – it actually occurs in all hotel segments and locations.
2. Victims are only those who are less than 18 years of age - once an individual turns 18, they are classified as an adult; however, they may still be victims of human trafficking.
3. Traffickers possess all the same characteristics – individuals who are involved in trafficking are diverse and active in all markets.
4. Victims of human trafficking are all the same sex– people tend to believe only females are affected although there are data indicating men are trafficked and these insinuations may be difficult to spot.
5. Human trafficking only occurs at mega events – media has focused on the activity occurring primarily at large events but this serious crime takes place every day of the year.

Preventative Measures

Several government organizations and professional organizations have become involved in preventing human trafficking. Many have developed toolkits and resources to train employees on how to identify human trafficking and what to do if they suspect human trafficking is occurring in the establishment where they work.

Blue Campaign

The Department of Homeland Security has created a toolkit as part of the *Blue Campaign* in order to give employees resources and help educate them on human trafficking (The Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). The toolkit includes information about human trafficking such as definitions, spreading awareness, posters for the establishment, and signs to look for to help identify human trafficking. This toolkit can be helpful because it is customized to each department and gives specific signs employees in each area can look for when trying to detect human trafficking. The materials cover the following departments: housekeeping, maintenance, room service, concierge, front desk, bellman, valet, and security (Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). As an example, materials customized for housekeeping, room service, and maintenance staff note that these employees should pay attention to guests who have been staying for an extended period of time but who have few or no personal belongings in the room (Department of Homeland Security, N.A.).

The Code

The Code was created in 1996 after the first World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, by the End Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT) in Sweden along with United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (The Code, 2019). In 2004 *The Code* was disseminated globally and became an independent non-profit organization (The Code, 2019). “*The Code* is a multi-stakeholder initiative with the mission to provide awareness, tools, and support to the tourism industry to prevent the sexual exploitation of children” (The Code, 2019, para. 1). Because the hospitality industry is an unwilling participant in aiding human trafficking, companies are taking preventative steps by adopting *The Code* (Sarkisian, 2015). Companies that sign *The Code* are agreeing to put maximum efforts in order to protect victims of

human trafficking by creating awareness as well as training employees (Sarkisian, 2015). “*The Code* contains six essential steps:

- 1) Establish Policy and Procedures – against the sexual exploitation of children
- 2) Train Employees – in children’s rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation and how to report suspected cases
- 3) Include a Clause in Contracts – through the value chain stating a common repudiation and zero tolerance policy of sexual exploitation of children
- 4) Provide Information to Travelers – on children’s rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and how to report suspected cases
- 5) Support, Collaborate, and Engage Stakeholders – in the prevention of sexual exploitation of children
- 6) Report Annually – on implementation of the six criteria” (The Code, 2019, para. 4).

Many worldwide organizations have already adopted *The Code*. Some of these companies include but are not limited to Hilton Worldwide, Wyndham Worldwide, and Delta Airlines. The hope is that not adopting *The Code* will soon be uncommon; and, customers will show loyalty to companies whose values illustrate protecting individuals against human trafficking (Sarkisian, 2015).

No Room for Trafficking

In 2019, the American Hotel and Lodging Association started a new campaign called *No Room for Trafficking*. This campaign differs from *The Code* because it focuses on all victims whereas *The Code* focuses only on the exploitation of children. The *No Room for Trafficking* campaign is also designed to build on the industry’s long-standing commitment to fight human

trafficking and create a single comprehensive approach to the issue (American Hotel and Lodging Association, 2019). Over 27,000 members have joined this initiative and are committed to combatting human trafficking in the hospitality industry; some of these members include Walt Disney Parks and Resorts®, Marriott International®, Hyatt®, and Caesars Entertainment® (American Hotel and Lodging Association, 2019). “*No Room for Trafficking* has an action plan that contains five steps:

- 1) Training staff on what to look for and how to respond
- 2) Displaying Human Trafficking Indicator Signage
- 3) Establishing a Companywide Policy
- 4) Ongoing Coordination with Law Enforcement
- 5) Sharing Success Stories and Best Practices” (American Hotel and Lodging Association, 2019, para. 5).

Each of these steps include more detailed descriptions and ways organizations can successfully carry out this action plan.

Guardians

In the hospitality industry, employees may come into contact with victims frequently. Paraskevas and Brookes (2018) studied ways to disrupt human trafficking at different points within hotel establishments by identifying points where traffickers and victims’ cross paths with “guardians”. Guardians were defined as hotel employees or managers who have the opportunity to disrupt human trafficking and aide victims (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). Because human trafficking consists of both sexual and labor exploitation, there are different departmental employees that can act as a “guardian”. Employees who interface with customers could be “guardians” to victims of sexual exploitation and employees who are department heads or human

resource personal could be “guardians” to victims facing labor exploitation (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018). The findings identify aspects of both sex trafficking and labor trafficking. The researchers indicated the following aspects as important: intervention point (e.g. arrival, check-In), Guardian (e.g. Front Desk Agent), potential signs to identify (e.g. guest displays signs of abuse or exhaustion), and potential ways to disrupt the situation (e.g. assign room that can be monitored throughout entire stay). These were identified in order to help make the hospitality industry less vulnerable to human trafficking (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2019). The study also revealed that “there is more work to be done to create awareness of trafficking in human beings within the tourism sector and to improve the training of employees as guardians to recognize the potential warning signs” (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018, p. 155).

Given all the initiatives discussed above, the hospitality industry has multiple tools available for learning how to combat human trafficking. If employees are better equipped with these tools, it could have a great impact on their awareness, beliefs, and training on the topic of human trafficking.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This research study was designed to analyze training, awareness, and beliefs that employees within the hospitality industry have in regards to human trafficking. A questionnaire was used to collect data from hotel employees. The questionnaire contained a variety of questions to yield both quantitative and qualitative data. A mixed methods approach allowed for a better understanding of the research questions (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Because human trafficking is such an intricate topic with many different aspects, it was important to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Some questions yielded results with specific numbers that could be analyzed allowing for comparisons and identifying potential trends (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The collection of more qualitative data gave employees the opportunity to answer open-ended questions and explain their thoughts and feelings on the topic. These data allow understanding of different perspectives and give a more in-depth view of the situation (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

It is important to collect and analyze data on this topic because human trafficking is a growing concern in the hospitality industry. By identifying the current level of training and awareness in regards to human trafficking in the hospitality industry, it can help identify areas needing improvement. This can help in educating more hospitality employees with the intent to prevent human trafficking.

Use of Human Subjects

Because this research involves human subjects, an application was submitted to the Iowa State University Human Subjects Review Board (IRB) prior to starting. No recruitment or data collection was initiated until IRB approval was received. Both the primary researcher and major

professor have completed Iowa State University's Human Subjects Research Assurance Training. Study participants were informed of the purpose of the study and notified of confidentiality measures that were employed. By completing the questionnaire, the participants consented to the study. Appendix A contains a copy of the approval letter received from IRB.

Sample

A convenience sample was used for this research study. The primary researcher reached out to contacts in the hospitality industry to get a variety of participants from different departments as well as hotels in two different states. Questionnaires were sent to three hotels in the Chicago area where the primary researcher had connections. A total of 85 questionnaires were distributed to the Chicagoland hotels. The primary researcher also visited hotels in Iowa and dropped off questionnaires to be completed by employees. The primary researcher went to 13 hotels in the Ames area and nine agreed to have their employees complete the questionnaires. A total of 89 questionnaires were distributed to hotels in Ames, Iowa. The primary researcher also attended a human trafficking training in Ankeny, Iowa and distributed 12 questionnaires to hotel employees that were in attendance. The questionnaires were distributed and completed prior to the training session.

It was important to identify what position each participant held in the organization because each department plays a different role when it comes to identifying human trafficking. There are different signs that employees working in each department must be alert to when it comes to playing a role in preventing human trafficking in the hospitality industry. Therefore, the sample also included individuals who were in upper management.

Questionnaire

A paper questionnaire was used to collect data about human trafficking from employees within the lodging industry. The questionnaire contained questions about demographics, position in the organization, level of training, awareness, and beliefs in regards to human trafficking within the hospitality industry. Nine of the twenty-seven questions were written with Likert-type responses options using a 5-point scale. The researchers formulated questions based on prior knowledge as a hotel employee and from the review of literature. The Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign was used to determine options to choose from in the department categories such as: front office, housekeeping, room service, security, bell services, and maintenance (The Department of Homeland Security, N.A.). A cover letter was included with the distribution of the questionnaire explaining the significance of the study, expectations and guidelines, and steps being taking to ensure confidentiality. The cover letter also explained that by completing the survey, the participant is giving implied consent to be a part of the research study. Appendix B contains a copy of the cover letter and questionnaire.

The questionnaire was pilot tested in order to detect problems with wording and understandability. The primary researcher distributed the questionnaire in two hospitality management courses at Iowa State University. The students were given the pilot questionnaire along with follow-up questions regarding clarity and understanding. A total of 14 questionnaires were completed during pilot testing; in the first course six questionnaires were completed and eight questionnaires were completed during the second course. Appendix C contains the follow-up pilot test questions that were distributed to the students. After analyzing the data collected from pilot testing, some minor edits were made to the original questionnaire. These edits were

made to question number five by adding a third-choice option and question number twenty-nine was reworded to improve clarity and understanding.

Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed via two different processes based on the location of each establishment. There was a process followed for establishments that received the paper questionnaire within a 50-mile radius to where the primary researcher was located. For establishments outside of that 50-mile radius, a second procedure was followed.

Paper questionnaire within 50-mile radius

The primary researcher dropped questionnaire packets off to general managers of hotels participating in the research study. The packet included the cover letter, questionnaire, and an additional envelope and seal. After employees received their questionnaires from the general manager and completed them, they placed it into the additional envelope and sealed it. Once sealed the envelope was returned to the general manager and the primary researcher returned to the establishment to pick up all completed questionnaires. In order to ensure a high return rate, the primary researcher maintained contact with each hotel and general manager to conduct follow-up and assess the progress of completion regarding questionnaires.

Additionally, the primary researcher attended a training session for hotel employees and was allowed to hand distribute questionnaires prior to the training. The completed questionnaires were collected prior to the start of the training session as the training session was about human trafficking and collecting afterwards may have biased the results.

Paper questionnaire outside 50-mile radius

The primary researcher sent questionnaire packets to the general managers of hotels participating in the research study. The packets included a cover letter, questionnaires, seals, and a larger envelope used for collecting the completed questionnaires. Once employees completed and sealed their questionnaires, preventing managers from seeing their responses, they returned them to their general managers. The general manager also received a flat rate postage box with pre-paid postage and the return address. General managers put the larger envelope containing all sealed questionnaires into the flat rate box and sent it back to the primary researcher.

Data Analysis

The primary researcher used excel to compile and analyze data collected from the completed questionnaires. Simple statistics were done including mean scores, standard deviations, and percentages. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize overall trends in data as well as help to identify variation and compare mean scores for beliefs, training and awareness scaled questions (Creswell and Guetterman, 2019). Overall trends in data were identified (Creswell and Guetterman, 2019).

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will show and discuss the results of data collected from Human Trafficking questionnaires distributed to hotel employees in Iowa and the Chicagoland area. A total of 186 questionnaires were distributed at 12 different hotels. Of the 186 questionnaires distributed, 118 were returned; therefore, the response rate was 63.44%.

Participant Characteristics

In this study, 67(57.26%) of the questionnaires were returned from the Chicagoland area in Illinois and 50(42.74%) questionnaires were returned from Iowa. Of the questionnaires returned from Iowa, 38(32.48%) were from Ames, 6(5.13%) were from Des Moines, and 6(5.13%) were from Ankeny. Of the 12 hotels that were surveyed, most employees answered that their establishments were mid-level hotels 59(50.00%) followed by luxury hotels 36(30.51%). Characteristics of hotel employee respondents are presented in Table 1. The largest group of hotel employee respondents were between 18 and 25 years of age (30.09%), followed by 26 through 35 years of age (26.55%). Of the 118 respondents, 73(61.86%) were female, 43(36.44%) were male, and 2(1.69%) preferred not to answer. Of the employees who responded, 47(40.17%) answered that they worked front office, 25(21.37%) in sales/accounting, 8(6.84%) in housekeeping, 8(6.84%) in management, and 7(5.98%) worked in the food and beverage department. The answer “other” was selected by 11(9.40%) of the respondents and this included write in responses of: talent and culture, service express, and operations. These areas of work within hotels has some comparison to 2018 statistics (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018) which showed 247,310(26.14%) of individuals who worked in the accommodation sector were hotel, motel, or resort desk clerks, thereby working at the front desk. There were 34,050(3.60%)

individuals who were lodging managers, 472,220(49.92%) were housekeeping cleaners, and 157,660(16.67%) were waiters and waitresses (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018).

For the 117 that responded to the question, the average work week was 40.68 hours. This contrasted with the data reported from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows that employees in the accommodation sector work an average of 29.3 hours per week as of January 2020 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2018). The average hours worked for study participants may be different from the data reported from the U.S. Department of Labor due the convenience sample used. The sample in this research study consisted mostly of full-time employees and managers which likely affected the overall mean.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Variable	n	Categories	Frequency	Percentage ^a
Age	113	18-25	34	30.09%
		26-35	30	26.55%
		36-45	19	16.82%
		46-55	11	9.73%
		56-65	18	15.93%
		66-75	1	0.88%
Sex ^a	118	Female	73	61.86%
		Male	43	36.44%
		Prefer not to answer	2	1.69%
Department	117	Front Office	47	40.17%
		Sales/Accounting	25	21.37%
		Other	11	9.40%
		Housekeeping	8	6.84%
		Management	8	6.84%
		Food and Beverage	7	5.98%
		Maintenance	4	3.42%
		Human Resources	3	2.56%
		Room Service	2	1.71%
		Security	2	1.71%

Table 1. Continued

Position	115	Front-line	48	41.74%
		Manager	43	37.39%
		Other	14	12.17%
		Supervisor	10	8.70%
Shift Worked ^b	117	Morning	81	69.23%
		Evening	43	36.75%
		Overnight	21	17.95%
		Other	18	15.38%
Years Worked in Hospitality Industry ^a	117	0-4	40	34.19%
		5-9	25	21.37%
		10-14	14	11.97%
		15-19	11	9.40%
		20-24	10	8.55%
		25-29	6	5.13%
		30 or more	11	9.40%
Hours per Week Worked ^a	117	0-9	1	0.85%
		10-19	2	1.71%
		20-29	7	5.98%
		30-39	18	15.38%
		40-49	64	54.70%
		50-59	21	17.95%
		60 and over	4	3.42%
Location	117	Chicagoland, IL	67	57.26%
		Ames, IA	38	32.48%
		Des Moines, IA	6	5.13%
		Ankeny, IA	6	5.13%
Hotel Type	118	Mid-Level	59	50.00%
		Luxury	36	30.51%
		Economy	11	9.32%
		Extended Stay	8	6.78%
		Other	4	3.39%

^a Percentages may not total to exactly 100 due to rounding issues.

^b Total percentages equal greater than 100 as participants could select multiple response options.

Awareness of Human Trafficking

Employee responses to awareness of human trafficking questions are represented in Table 2. Overall, on the topic of human trafficking, employees felt that they were moderately aware 52(44.07%). Of 117 respondents, 44(37.61%) answered that human trafficking is moderately prevalent in the hospitality industry. Employees were asked how often they think human trafficking occurs in the establishments where they worked, 54(45.76%) respondents answered that they believe it rarely occurs. The National Human Trafficking Hotline shows all the cases of Human Trafficking reported and who was affected in 2018. According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, there were 296 cases of human trafficking reported in Illinois, 226 of those cases involved sex trafficking, 32 were labor trafficking, 21 were not specified, and 32 involved both sex and labor trafficking (National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). From these 296 cases in Illinois, 583 victims and 217 traffickers were identified (National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). In Iowa, 102 cases of trafficking were reported with 76 involving sex trafficking, 16 were labor cases, 6 were not specified, and 4 cases involved both sex and labor trafficking (National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). There were 211 victims and 60 traffickers identified in Iowa (National Human Trafficking Hotline, 2019). As stated above, (45.76%) of respondents indicated that they believed human trafficking rarely occurs at their establishment but the data reported by the National Human Trafficking Hotline seems to indicate that human trafficking occurs in both Illinois and Iowa and affects many individuals.

Almost all of the respondents believed that females were affected 113(96.58%) by human trafficking. This aligns with 2018 statistics published by Polaris which showed that of the victims reported, (65.18%) were female (Polaris Project, 2020). As for which age is believed to be most affected, respondents in this study believed both adults and minors were affected

60(50.85%), then minors 54(45.76%), and adults 4(3.39%). However, Polaris data shows that adults are the most affected (46.50%), followed by unknown (32.07%), and then minors (21.43%) (Polaris Project, 2020). A majority of employees 77(65.81%) answered that they were not aware of any resources, organizations, or hotlines for reporting human trafficking.

Table 2: Participants' Awareness of Human Trafficking

Variable	N	Response Options	Frequency	Percentage ^a
How would you rate your awareness on the topic of human trafficking? ^a	118	Moderately aware	52	44.07%
		Extremely aware	35	29.66%
		Somewhat aware	26	22.03%
		Slightly aware	3	2.54%
		Not at all aware	2	1.69%
How prevalent do you think human trafficking is in the hospitality industry?	117	Moderately prevalent	44	37.61%
		Extremely prevalent	43	36.75%
		Somewhat prevalent	22	18.80%
		Slightly prevalent	6	5.13%
		Not at all prevalent	2	1.71%
How often do you think that human trafficking occurs in your establishment?	118	Rarely	54	45.76%
		Never	31	26.27%
		Sometimes	29	24.58%
		Often	3	2.54%
		All the time	1	0.85%
What demographic do you think is most affected by human trafficking cases?	117	Female	113	96.58%
		Male	2	1.71%
		Other	2	1.71%
What age group do you think is most affected by human trafficking cases?	118	Both	60	50.85%
		Minors (under 18)	54	45.76%
		Adults	4	3.39%
Are you aware of any resources, organizations, or hotlines for reporting human trafficking or direct victims to receive help?	117	No	77	65.81%
		Yes	40	34.19%

^a Percentages may not total to exactly 100 due to rounding issues.

Beliefs on Human Trafficking

Results for all the questions regarding employees' beliefs on human trafficking are represented in Table 3. For some of the questions, respondents were able to select more than one answer so percentages may total to greater than 100%. When asked what department has the most contact with human trafficking cases, 62(52.54%) employees selected the front office followed by 61(51.69%) respondents indicating housekeeping has the most contact. Hands on training/interactive training was selected by 63(53.39%) as the most beneficial way to help employees identify the signs of human trafficking. This was followed by presentation training 46(38.98%) as the next beneficial training method. Training was selected by 51(43.22%) employees to be extremely helpful in preventing human trafficking. Of 118 respondents who answered the question, 49(41.53%) believed that employees have extreme responsibility in preventing human trafficking. The respondents were asked what they believed to be the biggest area of concern within the hospitality industry and the majority answered sex trafficking (56.41%); others responded that the biggest concern area was both sex and labor trafficking (41.77%), and labor trafficking (1.71%). Part of this aligns with data reported to the National Human Trafficking Resource Center whereby the majority of human trafficking cases in hotels involved sex trafficking (92%), labor trafficking (5%), and both sex and labor trafficking (2%) (National Human Trafficking Resource Center, N.A.).

Table 4 shows the compiled analysis of responses from hotel employee participants who answered the following open-ended question, "When you hear the term human trafficking what does that mean to you?". Appendix D contains all free responses to this open-ended question.

Table 3: Participants' Beliefs on Human Trafficking

Variable	n	Categories	Frequency	Percentage^a
What department do you think has the most contact with human trafficking cases? ^b	118	Front office	62	52.54%
		Housekeeping	61	51.69%
		Room service	17	14.41%
		Security	8	6.78%
		Bell services	7	5.93%
		Maintenance	6	5.08%
		Other	2	1.69%
What do you think is the biggest area of concern for human trafficking within the hospitality industry?	117	Sex trafficking	66	56.41%
		Both	49	41.88%
		Labor trafficking	2	1.71%
What kind of training do you believe would be the most beneficial to help employees identify the signs of human trafficking? ^b	118	Hands on or interactive	63	53.39%
		Presentation	46	38.98%
		Online course	21	17.80%
		Pamphlets	11	9.32%
		Other	1	1.69%
Who do you believe needs to receive training on human trafficking? ^b	118	All departments	98	83.05%
		All shifts	47	39.83%
		Departments that have the most contact with guests	22	18.64%
		Evening shift	6	5.08%
		Overnight shift	6	5.08%
		Morning shift	5	4.24%
How helpful do you believe that employee training is in preventing human trafficking?	118	Extremely helpful	51	43.22%
		Moderately helpful	40	33.90%
		Somewhat helpful	19	16.10%
		Slightly helpful	6	5.09%
		Not at all helpful	2	1.69%
What responsibility do you believe employees have in preventing human trafficking? ^a	118	Extremely responsible	49	41.53%
		Moderately responsible	32	27.12%
		Somewhat responsible	25	21.19%
		Slightly responsible	7	5.93%
		Not at all responsible	5	4.24%

^a Percentages may not total to exactly 100 due to rounding issues.

^b Total percentages equal greater than 100 as participants could select multiple response options.

Table 4. Themes and Illustrative Quotes for the Open-Ended Question: “When you hear the term human trafficking what does that mean to you?”

Theme	Illustrative Quote
Forcing Individuals to Participate in Sex or Labor Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Someone taken against their will and forced into sex slavery or slave labor” • “Someone is being forced to do something generally against their will. They are unable to break away” • “Any situation in which an individual or individuals are illegally transported for exploitation. Most commonly for forced labor and for sexual exploitation”
Kidnapping/Taken Against Your Will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “To me that means mostly minors being kidnapped and sold into sex labor or things like that” • “Human trafficking to me means when you kidnap someone and force them to do things against their will like prostitution and free labor” • “A human taken against their will/coerced under threat of harm to themselves, family, etc. to an undisclosed location unable to leave freely”

Table 4. Continued

Minors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I mostly think of children. They are taken advantage of and can’t control certain situations” • “Sex with underage minors in hotels in exchange for money. Usually minors are held with threats” • “I usually think of underage or young adult women in sex trafficking”
Money/Profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Taking people without their consent to use them for labor or sex to make a profit” • “A worldwide problem that is prevalent in hospitality - involving children and other demographics for sex or drugs -for purposes of making a profit” • “Humans selling humans for money and it’s scary for everyone especially women”
Employees’ Feelings About Human Trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A terrible act that I feel personally responsible to be aware of in my position to prevent because we may be the only people that can save people in that situation” • “A horrible issue that is very upsetting. Would love additional resources on how to actively combat human trafficking” • “Can happen to anyone, happens more than you think, everyone needs to be more aware, under reported, not priority to law enforcement, biased media coverage”

Training on Human Trafficking

Results related to employee training on human trafficking are presented in Table 5. When asked if respondents had been trained about human trafficking in their current positions, a majority of respondents answered “yes” (n=93; 79.49%). Of these respondents, 52(55.91%) said the training they received consisted of a presentation followed by 43(46.24%) respondents indicating an online training course. Regarding the information respondents received during training, 36(38.71%) answered that it was extremely useful, followed by moderately useful 26(27.96%), and then somewhat useful 22(23.66%). A majority of respondents (n=71; 60.68%) believed that human trafficking training for their department would be extremely beneficial. When asked how confident they were in identifying signs of human trafficking, 45(38,14%) respondents answered they are somewhat confident. Respondents felt moderately comfortable (n=33; 28.21%) getting involved in a situation with human trafficking followed by being somewhat comfortable (n= 32;27.35%) and then slightly comfortable (n=24;20.51%).

Respondents were asked, “What training do you feel would be most beneficial to learn about human trafficking?” and answered in their own words. The responses were analyzed and Table 6 shows the frequency of responses and the percent of respondents who answered. Appendix E shows the data analysis process used to develop the themes for these responses.

Table 5. Human Trafficking Training

Variable	n	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
In your current position, have you been trained on the topic of human trafficking?	117	Yes	93	79.49%
		No	24	20.51%
What kind of training did you receive? ^b	93	Presentation	52	55.91%
		Online course	43	46.24%
		Pamphlet	6	6.45%
		Other	4	4.30%
		Hands on/interactive	2	2.15%
How useful was the information you received?	93	Extremely useful	36	38.71%
		Moderately useful	26	27.96%
		Somewhat useful	22	23.66%
		Slightly useful	7	7.53%
		Not at all useful	2	2.15%
How beneficial do you think it would be for your position to have training on human trafficking?	117	Extremely beneficial	71	60.68%
		Moderately beneficial	24	20.51%
		Somewhat beneficial	10	8.55%
		Slightly beneficial	8	6.84%
		Not at all beneficial	4	3.42%
In your previous positions, have you been trained on the topic of human trafficking?	117	No	70	59.83%
		Yes	34	29.06%
		Have not held previous position	13	11.11%
How confident are you in identifying signs of human trafficking? ^a	118	Somewhat confident	45	38.14%
		Moderately confident	37	31.36%
		Slightly confident	20	16.95%
		Extremely confident	9	7.63%
		Not at all confident	7	5.93%
How comfortable would you feel getting involved in a situation that involved human trafficking? ^a	117	Moderately comfortable	33	28.21%
		Somewhat comfortable	32	27.35%
		Slightly comfortable	24	20.51%
		Extremely comfortable	16	13.68%
		Not at all comfortable	12	10.26%

^a Percentages may not total to exactly 100 due to rounding issues.

^b Total percentages equal greater than 100 as participants could select multiple response options.

Table 6: Response Themes for the Open-Ended Question: “What training do you feel would be most beneficial to learn about human trafficking?” (n=99)

Themes	Responses	Percent Respondents ^a
Method of Training (n=65)		
All	2	3.08%
Presentation	28	43.08%
Examples	11	16.92%
Video	4	6.15%
Hands On/Interactive	25	38.46%
Online	9	13.85%
Partner with Law Enforcement	7	10.77%
Training Topics (n=40)		
Signs to Look For	34	85%
How to Report	6	15%
How to Train Staff	1	2.50%
How to Confirm	2	5.00%
Self Defense	2	5.00%
How to Handle Situation	14	35%
Age/Demographic Affected	1	2.50%
Frequency of Training (n=5)		
Quarterly	2	40%
Bi-Annually	1	20%
Annually	3	60%

^aTotal percentages equal greater than 100 as participants responses included multiple answers.

Scaled Questions on Awareness, Beliefs, and Training

Table 7 presents the mean, standard deviation, and overall means for scaled questions in the awareness, beliefs, and training sections on the questionnaire. All of the scaled response options were anchored 1 through 5 (1= Not at all, 2 = Slightly, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = Moderately, 5 = Extremely). In the section for awareness, the highest mean score ($M=4.03$, $SD=0.96$) was for the question “How prevalent do you think human trafficking is in the hospitality industry?”. Overall, the respondents believed that human trafficking is moderately prevalent in the hospitality industry. The highest mean score in the area of beliefs on human trafficking was ($M=4.12$, $SD=0.97$). Overall, respondents believed training would be moderately helpful in preventing human trafficking. The highest mean score ($M=4.28$, $SD=1.10$) in the area of training was from the question, “How beneficial do you think it would be for your position to have training on human trafficking?”. Overall, respondents thought training in their current position would be moderately beneficial trending towards extremely beneficial. Overall mean scores were determined for each of the three sections: awareness ($M=4.00$), beliefs ($M=4.04$), and training ($M=3.24$).

Table 7: Mean Scores of Scaled Items for Awareness, Beliefs, and Training

Variables	n	Mean^a	Standard Deviation
<u>Awareness</u>			
How would you rate your awareness on the topic of human trafficking?	118	3.97	0.88
How prevalent do you think human trafficking is in the hospitality industry?	117	4.03	0.96
Overall Mean		4.00	
<u>Beliefs</u>			
How helpful do you believe that employee training is in preventing human trafficking?	118	4.12	0.97
What responsibility do you believe employees have in preventing human trafficking?	118	3.96	1.12
Overall Mean		4.04	
<u>Training</u>			
How useful was the information you received?	93	3.94	1.06
How beneficial do you think it would be for your position to have training on human trafficking?	117	4.28	1.10
How confident are you in identifying signs of human trafficking?	118	3.18	1.00
How comfortable would you feel getting involved in a situation that involved human trafficking?	117	3.15	1.20
Overall Mean		3.24	

^a Scale anchors ranged 1 through 5.

Overall Perceptions of Human Trafficking

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked for any additional comments they had in regards to human trafficking. Table 8 shows the themes and illustrative quotations received. Appendix F contains a table of all the responses that were received regarding their additional comments. Overall, the respondents wrote about training, identifying and reporting, awareness, and prevention of human trafficking.

Table 8. Open Response Answers to the Question: “Please add any additional comments you have on your views regarding human trafficking in the hospitality industry”

Themes	Illustrative Quotes
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Additional training and resources are necessary” • “All hotels are responsible for doing their parts in raising awareness, training, and cultivating a culture where this topic is talked about thus creating the open communication if a colleague sees or hears something suspicious” • “My training has changed how I watch people interact with one another and the children interactions with adults. It saddens me that I am doing this but I realize it’s part of my responsibility”
Identifying/Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We should be aware and alert and report any suspicious activity regarding human and other malicious acts” • “It’s a tough topic because we know that it’s happening but we don’t have the knowledge of what to look for and what if we wrongly accuse a guest? Repercussions of wrongly identifying it is an issue”

Table 8. Continued

Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We need to be more sensitive and aware” • “Human trafficking awareness is needed. I don’t really know age demographics but assume its minors”
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I do believe it does happen but I also believe it is hard to "see" or even catch/prevent due to the "privacy" rules within the hospitality industry” • “We as employees need to keep our eyes open for potential trafficking situations in our hotel. It may not be common, but we need to be prepared in case it does happen” • “There should be more control at the front desk, everybody staying in the hotel or visiting should check in”

Summary

The data presented in this chapter illustrates the importance and interest in preventing human trafficking by a small sample of hotel employees. Employees who participated in this research study indicated their concerns about the topic and stated in multiple questions the need to spread awareness to help prevent human trafficking from occurring. In Table 4 and Table 8, there are direct quotes from participants about how they feel in regards to human trafficking. One participant stated, “It’s a tough topic because we know that it’s happening but we don’t have the knowledge of what to look for and what if we wrongly accuse a guest? Repercussions of wrongly identifying it is an issue”. Hotel employees in this study appeared to have a desire to take initiative and aid in combating human trafficking. Another hotel employee who participated in

this study wrote, “A horrible issue that is very upsetting. Would love additional resources on how to actively combat human trafficking”. It appears that participants know human trafficking exists but may be unaware of how often it occurs. A majority of the employees who participated in this study indicated they had been trained on the topic of human trafficking but feel that continuous training would be beneficial.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter will discuss and summarize the findings of this research study. It will also present the limitations of the study, as well as, the implications that were concluded and recommendations for future research.

Summary of Research

From the data that was collected and analyzed, hotel employees feel the topic of human trafficking is extremely important and that they have responsibility in preventing human trafficking in the lodging industry. However, hotel employee participants were only somewhat confident identifying the signs and getting involved in a situation that involves human trafficking. Human trafficking training in the lodging industry seems to be prevalent with 79.31% (n=93) of this sample having been trained; however, the extent of this training and effectiveness of the training is unknown. In this sample, of the hotel employees who received training, a presentation training method was implemented in their training program by 52.48% (n=53). However, the majority of respondents (n=63, 53.39%) indicated that they believe a hands on/interactive training method would be the most beneficial.

It is important to note that there is limited research on the topic of human trafficking training in the hospitality industry and this research study was one of the first to survey hotel employees on their perceptions. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, employees might have difficulty talking about or be scared to report an incident they see. Training may warrant an opportunity for hotel employees to start a conversation with their managers or security personnel about human trafficking. It may also be beneficial for individual hotels to implement an anonymous way for their employees to report incidents they think involve human trafficking.

Limitations

A small convince sample was used for this study and only 12 hotels in two U.S. states were represented in the data set. Therefore, the results of this study are not generalizable. There were a variety of departments represented, however the largest group was the front office with 40.17% (n=47) respondents. Also, the hotels that were surveyed in Iowa (n=9) were small mid-level hotels and those in the Chicagoland area (n=3) were larger and more up-scale.

Implications and Future Research

Overall, human trafficking appears to be an under discussed topic in the hospitality industry but is of paramount importance. There is limited research on the impact it has on the industry and what employee training methods are most effective in combating human trafficking. Therefore, this study provides implications for both hotel managers and employees.

For hotel managers, it is important to implement an effective training programs and make sure employees feel comfortable talking about these situations. Human trafficking is a sensitive topic area; therefore, providing hotel employees with resources so they know how to report and handle cases is crucial in preventing the continuation of human trafficking. For employees, it is important that they receive the same training, have continuous/up-to-date training, and talk to management about anything they see. It is important for employees to have open communication with management and report anything they see irrespective of how insignificant it may seem.

Future research suggestions include: utilizing a larger sample and assessing training effectiveness. It would beneficial to repeat this study on a larger and recruit a more representative sample of the hotel industry. By doing this study on a larger scale, it would help hotel managers assess the level of training their employees have and help managers improve their training procedures. Some participants in this research study were attending a human

trafficking training session and filled out the questionnaire before they went through the training. It would be beneficial to do another research study and compare the beliefs and awareness between employees who have never been trained and those who have had previous training. Also, it would be important to research the best type of training method for the topic of human trafficking. Therefore, creating a study that surveys individuals who have been trained using different methods and evaluating which one was most effective would be beneficial for the industry. This may warrant creation of a customized training program for different geographical locations where cultural norms may vary. By creating these customized programs, it will help to ensure that training is sensitive to the cultural norms and all hotel employees receive the same training and information on the topic of human trafficking.

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APPENDIX A. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
2420 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
Ames, Iowa 50014
515 294-4566

Date: 12/02/2019

To: Marilyn Gasienica Susan W Wohlsdorf-Arendt

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry: Employee Awareness, Beliefs, and Training

IRB ID: 19-585

Submission Type: Initial Submission **Exemption Date:** 12/02/2019

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from most requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.104 or 21 CFR 56.104 because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

2018 - 2 (i): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) when the information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

The determination of exemption means that:

- **You do not need to submit an application for continuing review. Instead, you will receive a request for a brief status update every three years. The status update is intended to verify that the study is still ongoing.**
- **You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application.** Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any *modifications to the research procedures* (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, nature or duration of behavioral interventions, use of deception, etc.), any change in *privacy or confidentiality protections*, modifications that result in the *inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations*, removing plans for informing participants about the study, any *change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants*, and/or any change such that the revised procedures do not fall into one or more of the [regulatory exemption categories](#). The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.
- All **changes to key personnel** must receive prior approval.
- **Promptly inform the IRB of any addition of or change in federal funding for this study.** Approval of the protocol referenced above applies only to funding sources that are specifically identified in the corresponding IRB application.

Detailed information about requirements for submitting modifications for exempt research can be found on our [website](#). For modifications that require prior approval, an amendment to the most recent IRB application must be submitted in IRBManager. A determination of exemption or approval from the IRB must be granted before implementing the proposed changes.

Non-exempt research is subject to many regulatory requirements that must be addressed prior to implementation of the study. Conducting non-exempt research without IRB review and approval may constitute non-compliance with federal regulations and/or academic misconduct according to ISU policy.

Additionally:

- All research involving human participants must be submitted for IRB review. **Only the IRB or its designees may make the determination of exemption**, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.
- **Please inform the IRB if the Principal Investigator and/or Supervising Investigator end their role or involvement with the project** with sufficient time to allow an alternate PI/Supervising Investigator to assume oversight responsibility. Projects must have an [eligible PI](#) to remain open.
- **Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected [adverse experiences](#) involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) any other [unanticipated problems](#) involving risks to subjects or others.**
- **Approval from other entities may also be needed.** For example, access to data from private records (e.g., student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. **An IRB determination of exemption in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.**
- Your research study may be subject to [post-approval monitoring](#) by Iowa State University's Office for Responsible Research. In some cases, it may also be subject to formal audit or inspection by federal agencies and study sponsors.
- Upon completion of the project, transfer of IRB oversight to another IRB, or departure of the PI and/or Supervising Investigator, please initiate a Project Closure in IRBManager to officially close the project. For information on instances when a study may be closed, please refer to the [IRB Study Closure Policy](#).

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-4566 or IRB@iastate.edu.

APPENDIX B.
COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Title of Study: Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry: Employee Awareness, Beliefs,
and Training

Investigators: Marilyn Gasienica and Susan W. Arendt

Dear Hotel Employee,

Your help is needed, we are studying human trafficking in the hospitality industry and your perspectives are important to us. The purpose of this study is to determine the awareness, beliefs, and level of training employees in the hospitality industry have in regards to human trafficking. You are being invited to participate in this research study because you are an employee at a hotel.

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for approximately 10-15 minutes. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time. Your decision to participate in this research study will not affect the status of your employment. During this research study you can expect the following procedures to be followed: you will receive the questionnaire packet which will include the questionnaire, an additional envelope and a seal. The questionnaire has four sections you will be asked to complete. The first section will cover awareness followed by beliefs, training, and demographic. After completion of the questionnaire you will place it in the additional envelope and seal the envelope. Once you place the seal, please give the envelope to your general manager for return to the researcher.

To ensure confidentiality the following measures will be taken:

1. Questionnaires will remain completely anonymous and will not ask for any personal identifiers.
2. No hotel will be identified by name in the published research.
3. Only the researchers will have access to study the records.
4. All questionnaires will be placed in a seal envelope by the individual filling them out, and will not be opened by anyone except the identified researchers.

At this time there are no foreseeable risks from participating in this research study. Participants in this research study will not incur any costs and will not be compensated.

We hope the information collected from this research study will benefit society as well as managers in the hospitality industry in order to develop strategies on training and addressing the topic of human trafficking. If you have any questions regarding the research study or the research findings please contact Marilyn Gasienica at marilyng@iastate.edu or Dr. Susan Arendt at sarendt@iastate.edu. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

The return of a completed questionnaire indicates your willingness and consent to participate in this research study. Your time and input are appreciated, thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Gasienica
Graduate Student – Hospitality Management
Iowa State University
Marilyng@iastate.edu

Susan W. Arendt, PhD, RD, FAND
Professor in Hospitality Management
Associate Chair for Undergraduate Academic Affairs – Iowa State University
sarendt@iastate.edu; (515) 294-7575

Questionnaire
Human Trafficking in the Hospitality Industry

Awareness of Human Trafficking

Question **1** of **31**

How would you rate your awareness on the topic of human trafficking?

1. Not at all aware
2. Slightly aware
3. Somewhat aware
4. Moderately aware
5. Extremely aware

Question **2** of **31**

How prevalent do you think human trafficking is in the hospitality industry?

1. Not at all prevalent
2. Slightly prevalent
3. Somewhat prevalent
4. Moderately prevalent
5. Extremely prevalent

Question **3** of **31**

How often do you think that human trafficking occurs in your establishment?

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Often
5. All the time

Question **4** of **31**

What demographic do you think is most affected by human trafficking cases?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Other

Question **5** of **31**

What age group do you think is most affected by human trafficking cases?

1. Adults
2. Minors (Individuals under the age of 18)
3. Both

Question **6** of **31**

Are you aware of any resources, organizations, or hotlines for reporting human trafficking or direct victims to receive help? If yes, please specify

1. No
2. Yes, please specify _____

Beliefs about Human Trafficking

Question **7** of **31**

What department do you think has the most contact with human trafficking cases?

1. Front Office
2. Housekeeping
3. Room Service
4. Security
5. Bell Services
6. Maintenance
7. Other: please specify _____

Question **8** of **31**

What do you think is the biggest area of concern for human trafficking within the hospitality industry?

1. Labor Trafficking
2. Sex Trafficking
3. Both Labor and Sex Trafficking
4. Other: please specify _____

Question **9** of **31**

What kind of training do you believe would be the most beneficial to help employees identify the signs of human trafficking?

1. Online Course
2. Pamphlets
3. Presentation
4. Hands on or interactive training courses
5. Other: please specify _____

Question **10** of **31**

Who do you believe needs to receive training on human trafficking (select all that apply)?

1. Training in all departments
2. Training in departments that have the most contact with guests
3. Training for all shifts
4. Training for morning shift
5. Training for evening shift
6. Training for overnight shift

Question **11** of **31**

How helpful do you believe that employee training is in preventing human trafficking?

1. Not at all helpful
2. Slightly helpful
3. Somewhat helpful
4. Moderately helpful
5. Extremely helpful

Question **12** of **31**

What responsibility do you believe employees have in preventing human trafficking?

1. Not at all responsible
2. Slightly responsible
3. Somewhat responsible
4. Moderately responsible
5. Extremely responsible

Training on Human TraffickingQuestion **13** of **31**

In your current position, have you been trained on the topic of human trafficking?

1. Yes
2. No (If you select No, skip to question #16)

Question **14** of **31**

What kind of training did you receive?

1. Online Course
2. Presentation
3. Pamphlet
4. Hands on interactive training course
5. None
6. Other: please specify _____

Question **15** of **31**

How useful was the information you received?

1. Not at all useful
2. Slightly useful
3. Somewhat useful
4. Moderately useful
5. Extremely useful

Question **16** of **31**

How beneficial do you think it would be for your position to have training on human trafficking?

1. Not at all beneficial
2. Slightly beneficial
3. Somewhat beneficial
4. Moderately beneficial
5. Extremely beneficial

Question **17** of **31**

In your previous positions, have you been trained on the topic of human trafficking?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Have not held previous position

If yes, what was the previous position you held? _____

Question **18** of **31**

How confident are you in identifying signs of human trafficking?

1. Not at all confident
2. Slightly confident
3. Somewhat confident
4. Moderately confident
5. Extremely confident

Question **19** of **31**

How comfortable would you feel getting involved in a situation that involved human trafficking?

1. Not at all comfortable
2. Slightly comfortable
3. Somewhat comfortable
4. Moderately comfortable
5. Extremely comfortable

Demographics

Question **20** of **31**

What is your age? _____

Question **21** of **31**

What is your sex?

1. Female
2. Male
3. Other
4. Prefer not to answer

Question **22** of **31**

In what department do you work?

1. Front Office
2. Housekeeping
3. Room Service
4. Security
5. Bell Services
6. Maintenance
7. Other: please specify _____

Question **23** of **31**

What position do you hold?

1. Front-line
2. Supervisor
3. Manager
4. Other: please specify _____

Question **24** of **31**

What shifts do you work (select all that apply)?

1. Morning shift
2. Evening shift
3. Overnight shift
4. Other: please specify _____

Question **25** of **31**

How long have you worked in the hospitality industry? _____ years _____ months

Question **26** of **31**

On average, how many hours do you work a week? _____ hours

Question **27** of **31**

Where is your establishment located?

1. Des Moines, IA
2. Ames, IA
3. Chicagoland Area, IL
4. Other: please specify _____

Question **28** of **31**

How would you describe the lodging establishment where you work?

1. Economy
2. Mid-level
3. Extended stay
4. Luxury
5. Other: please specify _____

Additional QuestionsQuestion **29** of **31**

What training do you feel would be most beneficial to learn about human trafficking?

Question **30** of **31**

When you hear the term human trafficking what does that mean to you?

Question **31** of **31**

Please add any additional comments you have on your views regarding human trafficking in the hospitality industry

APPENDIX C. PILOT TESTING QUESTIONS

My name is Marilyn Gasienica and I am currently doing research for my Master's thesis assisted by my major professor Dr. Susan Arendt. This class will be used in order to pilot test the questionnaire for my research study.

This research study will be focusing on determining the awareness, beliefs, and level of training employees in the hospitality industry have in regards to human trafficking. This questionnaire focuses on employees in the hotel sector of the hospitality industry. If you have not worked in a hotel, please fill the questionnaire to the best of your ability.

You are able to write questions and comments you have directly on the questionnaire. After you have completed all questions, please respond to the additional questions regarding clarity and wording of the questionnaire. Please be sure to elaborate as much as possible.

1. Were the questions easy to read and understandable? If no, please indicate which question number and what was difficult to understand.

2. Was the rating scale that was used easy to understand? (e.g. 1. Not at all aware, 2. Slightly aware, 3. Somewhat aware, 4. Moderately aware, 5. Extremely aware) If no, please indicate what you think could be changed to make the scale easier to understand.

3. Do you have any suggestions on how the questionnaire may be improved?

Thank you for your help and input with this pilot test, your time is appreciated.

APPENDIX D.
**OPEN RESPONSE ANSWERS TO “WHEN YOU HEAR THE TERM HUMAN
TRAFFICKING WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO YOU?”**

Responses	
Forcing Individuals to Participate in Sex or Labor Activities	Kidnapping/Taken Against Your Will
“People being forced to do things against their will. However, I will be honest many times I can’t imagine it taking place at my hotel”	“Kidnapping, Sex, Abuse, Fear, Suspicious” (4)
“Imprisonment. Forcing someone to work against their will. Soul murder. Slavery”	“To me that means mostly minors being kidnapped and sold into sex labor or things like that” (2)
“Someone taken against their will and forced into sex slavery or slave labor” (2)	“People being kidnapped for labor or to be put into sexual traffic and in some situations although less common in the us harvesting”
“People being forced to have sex for money or drugs” (3)	“human trafficking to me means when you kidnap someone and force them to do things against their will like prostitution and free labor”
“Human trafficking to me means there is a recruitment into forced labor, sex or sexual exploitation”	“Sex slave, minors kidnapped”
“Someone (women, children, and men) being taken against their will and forced into work of all forms sex, labor, etc. and someone else benefitting from those who perform the "work"”	“Similar to kidnapping but where I envision kidnapping as targeted at an individual, I perceive human trafficking as targeted at a demographic/ease of access to the victim (i.e. younger males for labor)”
“Someone is being forced to do something generally against their will. They are unable to break away” (5)	“A human taken against their will/coerced under threat of harm to themselves, family, etc. to an undisclosed location unable to leave freely”
“Forcing work upon a person against their will in exchange for money, protection, etc.”	“Human trafficking, people being taken against their will to be sold”
“Any situation in which an individual or individuals are illegally transported for exploitation. Most commonly for forced labor and for sexual exploitation”	“People moving people who don’t have control and using them as labor or sex”
“The forced exploitation of another person or persons into a situation to work on perform sexual acts against their will where they have no way out without the help or interference of an outside person or persons”	“People, women mostly being taken from home and being abused and drugged”

“Some innocent person has been taken from their home and is being forced to do something they don’t want to (sex slavery)”	“Sex with underage minors in hotels in exchange for money. Usually minors are held with threats”
“Forced sex for money” (2)	“Someone younger being held against their will to sell their body for someone else’s benefit”
Minors	“Someone performing services against their will and well-being”
“I think of first mostly young women and children. Mostly run aways”	“It means that there are people being held against their will and are in a dangerous situation”
“Illegal sex for money; labor and drugs for underage children”	“Individuals being coerced into doing something against their will and being terrified and scarred for life”
“Mostly think of prostitution but child labor can also be a problem”	“Someone holding someone against their will to sell them to be used for sex or labor as if they are property”
“Usually I think of women and children being sold or used for sex but found out there are many other forms of human trafficking”	“Terror - lack of any kind of control - unwillingness sex or labor”
“Sex trade, children being taken advantage of”	“Someone has been involuntary violated”
“Underage, unwilling prostitution”	“Person abusing and moving other persons without consent”
“I mostly think of children. They are taken advantage of and can’t control certain situations”	Money/Profit
“Victims needing help. Safety and security. Children, women, young adults, minorities, being held against their will”	“Taking people without their consent to use them for labor or sex to make a profit” (8)
“As of recently its more prevalent in America. I use to only hear about it being overseas. I think about teens and young kids”	“A person involved in a situation against their will where their safety is compromised” “A worldwide problem that is prevalent in hospitality - involving children and other demographics for sex or drugs -for purposes of making a profit”
“I usually think of underage or young adult women in sex trafficking”	“When humans are being exploited in a manner that isn’t legal and their freedom is stricken”
Employees’ Feelings About Human Trafficking	
“Modern day slavery” (2)	“People paying others or black mailing them into sexual favors”
“That someone has been stripped of their human rights”	“Humans selling humans for money and it’s scary for everyone especially women”
“It scares me. Abuse of human being”	“Humans being sold or held hostage”

“Labor and sex trafficking; slavery” (9)	“People/organizations taking advantage of other humans for financial gain”
“Control of another person”	“Sale of a human person for illicit acts”
“People taking something that doesn’t belong to them. It means that to them they’re not viewed as normal civilized human beings and that’s not at all right”	“Prostitution, porn”
“Can happen to anyone, happens more than you think, everyone needs to be more aware, under reported, not priority to law enforcement, biased media coverage”	“A person being used for sex or labor for personal gain”
“A terrible act that I feel personally responsible to be aware of in my position to prevent because we may be the only people that can save people in that situation”	“Selling someone to someone else, more money, illegal actions, trying not to get caught, sneaking things that’s not supposed to”
“A horrible issue that is very upsetting. Would love additional resources on how to actively combat human trafficking”	“Exploitation of people for work or sex work”
“It brings great sadness to my heart because it is at an all-time high right now”	
“Higher than you’d think here with Des Moines interstates, some hotels have safe haven procedures for human trafficking and domestic violence”	
“It should not happen in this era (never)”	
“Cruelty, suffering, illegal, rape, bad things, and that wrong doing like this should be stopped” (2)	
“Means a lot I have people I care about and could happen to one of them”	
“Sex trafficking of humans in rooms”	

Note: The parentheses indicate the number of respondents who gave that response. If no number is indicated, only one participant gave that response. Shading indicates categories and groupings of responses

APPENDIX E.
OPEN RESPONSE ANSWERS TO “WHAT TRAINING DO YOU FEEL WOULD BE MOST BENEFICIAL TO LEARN ABOUT HUMAN TRAFFICKING?”

Themes	Participant ID	Respondents
Method of Training		
All	1;97	2
Presentation	2;19;26;36;41;43;49;52;61;65;70;71;72;73;76;78;82;83;85;88;92;93;99;102;103;108;109;116	28
Examples	2;13;19;38;39;43;48;66;77;81;94	11
Video	13;40;52;94	4
Hands On/Interactive	14;16;23;24;25;26;30;35;36;37;44;45;46;48;49;56;60;63;66;76;86;88;94;98;101	24
Online	8;24;49;50;67;70;75;99;113	9
Training Topics		
Signs to Look For	5;7;9;10;16;19;21;23;28;34;38;39;42;47;51;54;55;58;59;62;64;66;68;72;79;84;95;96;100;105;106;107;111;117	34
How to Report	7;28;51;58;100;117	6
How to Train Staff	7	1
How to Confirm	9;29	2
Self Defense	10;38	2
How to Handle Situation	15;17;34;38;39;52;55;59;62;72;100;101;106;111	14
Age/Demographics	28	1
Frequency of Training		
Quarterly	6;33	2
Bi-Annually	103	1
Annually	8;103;108	3
Partner with Law Enforcement	19;25;27;36;63;112;114	7

APPENDIX F.
**OPEN RESPONSE ANSWERS TO “PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
 YOU HAVE ON YOUR VIEWS REGARDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE
 HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY”**

Responses	
Training	Identifying/Reporting
“Need signs in hotels making both victim and accuser the hotel has had training and is watching - where the victim can get help”	“Was taught we shouldn't interfere but call law enforcement to take care of it”
“Additional training and resources are necessary” (3)	“Human trafficking is definitely something that goes on in the hospitality industry but it can be difficult to spot. You can get a bad vibe from someone but there might not be enough evidence to call the cops or investigate”
“I'd like every hotel to have at least some kind of training on topic”	“It's a tough topic because we know that it's happening but we don't have the knowledge of what to look for and what if we wrongly accuse a guest? Repercussions of wrongly identifying it is an issue”
“Training yearly is helpful especially with a big group to hear any personal experiences or stories that helped someone”	“Security everywhere that some employees rely on it not happening here and also expect security to catch it if it does happen and this is wrong; this is when some employees begin to let their guards down. I think that it should be stressed that it really can happen anywhere”
“It is extremely important to educate people”	“Hotels are designed to make money. In any instance of human trafficking the individual being trafficked must alert the hotel before the process to aid that individual can begin. Otherwise the hotel could open itself up for lawsuits in a "false positive" scenario”
“Have to stress to teams that if you see something say something” (2)	“We should be aware and alert and report any suspicious activity regarding human and other malicious acts” (2)
“Daily reminders at beginning of shift, stand up meetings, focus, discussion” (2)	“We can all help with human trafficking by reporting any suspicious activity so it can be fully investigated”
Awareness	
“It's the ugly side of this business and it should be at the top of the list to improve”	“We need an easy to access database of known/suspected traffickers with known alias so if we encounter them, we can notify authorities”

	Prevention
“I hope that we get to a space in the industry where there is a better preventative measure to help people who are in danger”	“I work in what is considered a luxurious hotel and prior to watching the presentation shown to us on human trafficking it never even crossed my mind that it can take place here. I was wrong though; it can take place anywhere! I feel that because we are considered a luxurious hotel and also have”
“I’m glad the industry is being made aware”	“Doesn’t seem very prevalent from my experiences but I know it is there and is more common than I believe”
“It needs to be stopped we need to be aware of the signs”	“I’m surprised it happens as often as I’ve been told. I can only think of a very few possible cases in my 15 years of employment in hotels”
“We need to be more sensitive and aware” (2)	“I have never seen it before and if it is happening in or on the property where we work and are comfortable, we should be made aware so that we can report it and hopefully save someone”
“All hotels are responsible for doing their parts in raising awareness, training, and cultivating a culture where this topic is talked about thus creating the open communication if a colleague sees or hears something suspicious”	“I do believe it does happen but I also believe it is hard to "see" or even catch/prevent due to the "privacy" rules within the hospitality industry”
“Human trafficking awareness is needed. I don’t really know age demographics but assume its minors”	“Being involved in human trafficking can happen to anyone even someone working in the hospitality industry”
“It’s a terrible industry. some choose it thinking there are no other options. Most are forced to participate. It needs to be abolished”	“It is very scary to think about and hard to imagine coming across someone in that situation and not knowing”
“This has been a taboo subject for too long and the more we know about it the more empowered we will be to stop this issue”	“Should have ID for all who stay in hotel”
“It’s sad and scary. No one deserves to be forced into the situation”	“Easy to get a room and sell sex and made easy money”
“Attention should be paid it is a huge problem in some areas”	“There should be more control at the front desk, everybody staying in the hotel or visiting should check in”
“My training has changed how I watch people interact with one another and the children interactions with adults. It saddens me that I am doing this but I realize it’s part of my responsibility”	“This is one of the most immoral and offensive things that can happen to anybody. We should do anything and all we can to prevent this from happening. The victims that

	survive human trafficking are traumatized for life”
“We as employees need to keep our eyes open for potential trafficking situations in our hotel. It may not be common, but we need to be prepared in case it does happen”	“In the past, suspects of human trafficking have all been business established individuals that don’t scream illegal activity from first impression”

Note: The parentheses indicate the number of respondents who gave that response. If no number is indicated, only one participant gave that response. Shading indicates categories and groupings of responses